

MEMORANDUM

STATE OF ALASKA
Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
Alaska Marine Highway System

Master's Action Circular: 11-002

To: Masters
Chief Mates
All Vessels
Alaska Marine Highways

Date: Friday, May 13, 2011

Telephone : (907) 228-7281

Fax: (907) 225-1513



From: Captain David Jancauskas
AMHS Senior Port Captain

Subject: **NSTM/Mooring and Towing**

This memorandum accompanies Naval Ships Technical manual 582 for Mooring and Towing. While the manual contains a lot of useful information, of particular note is the section on mooring line, mooring line strength and a discussion and comparison of the various composites currently in use commercially.

Over the past several years we have tried, wherever possible, to switch from the Nylon/Dacron based lines to the new Aramid based lines. The successes include the elimination of back injuries and strain caused by dragging and heaving around on much heavier thicker lines, and an increased margin of safety for terminal personnel that have to retrieve and place those lines during all-weather mooring evolutions. The down side was the discovery of weak points in the shipboard and shoreside mooring systems that have developed due to age and normal wear and tear. To counter this we are developing a sacrificial pennant that will allow us to continue to use the newer line, while providing a breaking strength that doesn't exceed the bollard pull of our cleats, bitts and dock fixtures.

While we encourage the use of the newer lines, we continue to maintain that the Master may use the line of his choice under the conditions and circumstances he deems appropriate. I also encourage all to become familiar with the standard linehandling commands on page 21, to post them at mooring stations and to use them as appropriate. Standardization creates flexibility, familiarization on a broad scale, and is a proven technique in eliminating injuries.

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